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SUBJECT: PAKISTAN MEDIA REACTION: TOP STORIES, TERRORISM/MILITARY,

SECRETRY CLINTON'S VISIT, KERRY-LUGAR BILL, POLITICAL ISSUES,
ECON/BUSINESS, MISCELLANEOUS - OCTOBER 27, 2009

Summary: Most newspapers highlighted as their lead story reports of a meeting between President Asif Zardari and PML-N leader Nawaz Sharif. All dailies reported "no breakthrough" during the meeting of these political leaders. Also front-paged was Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan's address to the joint session of the Parliament in which he pledged "unwavering support against terrorism" to Pakistan. Reports on the arrest of 11 Iranian Revolutionary Guards in Balochistan's Washik district for illegally crossing the Pakistani border received extensive media coverage. Several dailies reported killing of 14 Americans in a helicopter crash in Afghanistan. Commenting on the assassination of a provincial minister in Quetta, the English language daily, "The News," observed that it will "only add to the instability and unrest encountered everywhere." The prestigious daily, "Dawn," termed it a "tragic reminder of the simmering tensions in the province." End Summary.

TOP STORIES

News Story: "No Breakthrough In Zardari-Nawaz Talks" "Dawn" (10/27)

"President Asif Ali Zardari and Chief of the Pakistan Muslim League-N, Nawaz Sharif, failed to make any breakthrough that could have paved the way for political reconciliation during their 90-minute meeting at the Presidency on Monday." (Story also front paged in all newspapers)

News Story: "Turkish PM Pledges Unwavering Support Against Terrorism" "Dawn" (10/27)

"Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan declared here on Monday that his country would continue to stand by Pakistan in the war on terror and strengthen relations between the two countries. Mr. Erdogan, who was addressing a joint session of the two houses of parliament, was warmly applauded when he said that Turkey and Pakistan were two strong states of the region and were contributing to regional and global peace efforts." (Story also front paged in all newspapers)

TERRORISM/MILITARY ISSUES

News Story: "11 Iranian Guards Held For Entering Pakistan Illegally" "Dawn" (10/27)

"Pakistani border forces arrested 11 Iranian Revolutionary Guards in Mashkal area of Balochistan's Washik district on Monday for

illegally crossing the border. According to sources, the Iranian guards were detained along with their vehicle after they intruded into Pakistani territory."

News Story: "Helicopter Crashes In Afghanistan Kill 14 Americans" "Dawn" (10/27)

"Helicopter crashes killed 14 Americans on Monday in the deadliest day for the U.S. mission in Afghanistan in more than four years. The deaths came as President Barack Obama prepared to meet his national security team for a sixth full-scale conference on the future of the troubled war." (Story also front paged in all newspapers)

News Story: "19 Militants, Six Soldiers Killed In SWA Clashes" "The News" (10/27)

"Continuing their advance from three sides on the Taliban strongholds of Srarogha, Ladha and Makeen on the 10th day of the operation Rah-e-Nijat, security forces claimed killing 19 more terrorists in three separate clashes on Monday. Six Army soldiers embraced Shahadat while 20 others suffered injuries in the fighting in Gharlai, Sarwek, Shaga and Sharkai Sar areas." (Story also front paged in all newspapers)

News Story: "Aide For Swat Taliban Chief Captured" "Dawn" (10/27)

"Security forces captured a close aide of Swat Taliban chief Maulana Fazlullah on Monday. Sources said Ali Shah Khan, who was in charge of collecting donations for the Tehrik Taliban Swat." (Story also front paged in all newspapers)

News Story: "Around 200,000 Flee Waziristan Offensive" "Dawn" (10/27)

"The Army Spokesperson said around 200,000 people have abandoned their homes in South Waziristan tribal area, where the military is pressing an offensive against Taliban militants."

News Story: "Sixteen Militants Killed In Hangu Clash" "Dawn" (10/27)

"Sixteen militants were killed and 23 others injured during a joint operation by the army and Frontier Constabulary in Tora Warai area of Hangu district on Sunday night and Monday. Fifty-four militants, some Afghans among them, were captured." (Story also front paged in all newspapers)

News Story: "Obama's Team Evaluates Pak And Afghan Strategy" "Dawn"

"U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton rushed out of an interview to Dawn/Dawn News to attend a White House Situation Room meeting called to finalize the administration's new policy for Afghanistan and Pakistan. U.S. President Barack Obama is expected to announce the new policy soon, which is expected to focus on Pakistan as the key player in the fight against extremists."

News Story: "Kerry Rules Out U.S. Combat Troops On Pakistani Soil" "The News" (10/27)

"The United States has enormous stakes in Pakistan's stability and must assist the country economically and militarily to help it overcome serious challenges and at the same time make it clear to the Pakistanis that Washington respects their sovereignty, Senator John Kerry advocated on Monday."

News Story: "NATO Must Check Infiltration From Afghanistan: Gilani" "Daily Times" (10/27)

"It is imperative that NATO and ISAF forces in Afghanistan remain vigilant and effectively curb cross-border infiltrations and the supply of arms to terrorists, said Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani on Monday. Addressing a joint sitting of parliament, Gilani said Pakistan believed in a regional approach to combat terrorism and promote peace and stability."

News Story: "India Funding Taliban: Malik" "Daily Times" (10/27)

"India is creating unrest within Pakistan by funding the Taliban

based along the Pak-Afghan border and by interfering in Balochistan, Interior Minister Rehman Malik said on Monday."

News Story: "Money Does Wonders for Terror Suspects" "The News" (10/27)

"An acute sense of insecurity prevails in the country amid reports of inept handling of terror suspects and inadequate medical facilities in hospitals. Reports are circulating that many terror suspects have managed to escape by bribing the police."

Editorial: "Shooting in Quetta" an editorial in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (10/27)

"In the current volatile situation we face, this will only add to the instability and unrest encountered everywhere. It is possible that as we descend into further violence, the Baloch nationalists are taking their cue from the Taliban and using similar tactics to make their own voice heard. The targeted killings in Quetta have expanded over the past few years. So too have incidents of kidnapping. The lack of law and order makes us feel as if we were living in a jungle with the state unable to perform its most fundamental duty of protecting life and ensuring safety."

Editorial: "Balochistan Ignored" an editorial in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (10/27)

"Losing faith in a government is one thing. In working democracies this lack of trust is expressed through the ballot box and change can be sought through peaceful means.... Sunday's assassination of Balochistan's Education Minister is a tragic reminder of the simmering tensions in the province. The full-blown insurgency witnessed in the Musharraf era may be a thing of the past but Balochistan is anything but stable. And matters could get worse if the centre persists with back-pedaling on its commitments."

Editorial: "Balochistan-SOS" an editorial in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (10/27)

"The targeted killing of Balochistan's Minister for Education was a deadly reminder of the ongoing terrorism in that province. It is unfortunate that the federal government, apart from declaratory platitudes expressing support and good intent, has failed to move substantively to resolve the problems in that deprived part of Pakistan. The irony is that on Balochistan everyone knows what should be done - that is political and economic solutions to resolve the feeling of discrimination and neglect that are harbored there. With each passing day, the hatred and suspicions mount on all sides and increasing polarization is becoming ever more evident."

Editorial: "State Of Affairs In Balochistan" an editorial in the Lahore-based liberal English language daily "Daily Times" (cir. 10,000) (10/27)

"All kinds of terrorists have assembled in Balochistan partly because of the "strategic depth" policies of the past. There are Afghan refugee camps in the province serving as breeding grounds for jihad against whomever they see as their enemies, including the Shia Hazaras of Quetta. The Iranian Baloch too take shelter in the province and strike across the Iranian border; and there is Lashkar-e-Jhangvi from Punjab which is enslaved to Al Qaeda and its plans in Balochistan. Tragically, those who support separation have no idea of the kind of ethnic-linguistic inferno they are inviting on to themselves."

Editorial: "Pak-Turkish Strategic Partnership And Bilateral Cooperation," an editorial in the second-largest, nationalist Urdu daily "Nawa-i-Waqt" (cir. 150,000) (10/27)

"Turkey is an ally of America, but it does not take dictation from that country and Pakistan can follow suit.... Both the American allies, Pakistan and Turkey, can tell America that the region's peace and stability is contingent upon the U.S. troops withdrawal from Afghanistan. It is hoped that both the countries would pay attention to this aspect while discussing the war against terrorism."

Opinion: "Ideas Can Win The War" an op-ed by Shahid Javed Burki in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (10/27)

"The real victory will come only when the people not just in the tribal areas but in all parts of the country decide that they have been misled by a small group of extremists. The people must make clear that they don't see their country and religion being under assault by the West, in particular the United States, and that it is their own people who are attacking them. In addition to the use of military power, what is required is the use of people's power. The war being fought in the hills of South Waziristan is not simply a military war; it is more a war of ideas.... What is the relevance of this debate in the United States for Pakistan's policymakers as they conduct their operations in South Waziristan? There are several. Of these I would like to focus on the following three. First the civilians must provide credible leadership to this effort by the military.... Second, there has to be only one system of governance in one country.... Third, people have also to act."

Opinion: "Of Peace And Pieces" an op-ed by Ahsan Nisar in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (10/28)

"The attack on GHQ has served two purposes. On the one hand, it was a message for the army to shut their mouth on the issue of the bill and on the other, it was a basis to justify the North Waziristan operation. Just like a wise ruler invents enemies and then slays them in order to control his own subjects, similarly, the apparently counterproductive bombings, arrests, torture, kidnappings and disappearances are intended not to eliminate the 'Islamic threat' but to contain it within manageable limits and to spawn the next generation of 'terrorists.'"

Opinion: "Waziristan And Its IDPs" an op-ed by Syed Mohammad Ali in the Lahore-based liberal English language daily "Daily Times" (cir. 10,000) (10/27)

"It should not be surprising that the consistent lack of economic development and the resulting deprivation in these areas enables easy recruitment of militants.... Instead, the Pakistani regime kept swinging between the use of military means and signing tenuous peace agreements, which could not be honored, and thus confused the local population and further eroded what little credibility it had in these areas. The U.S. also seemed keener to pursue military rather than economic or socially constructive alternatives in the region."

Opinion: "The shadow Of The Past" an op-ed by Dr. Maleeha Lodhi in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (10/27)

"Obama's predicament is how to balance rising Democratic opposition to the war with the risks of not accepting his military commander's recommendation for as many as 40,000 additional troops for Afghanistan, without which General Stanley McChrystal says the war will likely be lost. Obama knows that not heeding the military's counsel would expose him to the charge of 'endangering America's defence.' But ignoring the sentiments in his own party could jeopardize support for his ambitious, transformative domestic reform agenda.... Until he announces his strategy the Vietnamization of the debate will continue with cautionary tales being recounted in abundance."

SECRETARY CLINTON'S VISIT

Editorial: "Tell It To The Marines" an editorial in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (10/27)

"It is really hard to buy what Special Envoy Richard Holbrooke observed on Saturday. Whether one likes it or not, his statement that U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton would be visiting Pakistan as a friend has the tone of a diktat.... One cannot help but think that this visit is part of the U.S. saber-rattling forcing Pakistan between a rock and a hard place. Apart from the insult that has been slapped on us in the form of the demeaning conditions in the Kerry-Lugar Act, there are a number of other ways in which the U.S. exercises its hegemony over Pakistan."

Opinion: "Hillary Clinton's Upcoming Visit: A Possibility to Augment Hatred Against U.S." an op-ed by Khawar Chaudhry in the Karachi-based, pro-Taliban Jihadi Urdu daily "Islam" (cir. 15,000) (10/27)

"The sole purpose of the visits by U.S. officials to Pakistan has always been to safeguard the interests of their own country and the upcoming trip of Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, will not be different. No doubt, Washington has secured much of its targets in Pakistan with the connivance of our quisling rulers, but the hatred against the U.S. is growing among the Pakistani masses. It is need of the hour that the U.S. fully trust the Pakistani nation and help the latter to extinguish the fire Washington itself has sparked."

KERRY-LUGAR BILL

Opinion: "Encouraging Outcome Is Compulsion," an op-ed by Nazir Naji in the leading mass circulation populist, often sensational Urdu daily "Jang" (cir. 300,000) (10/27)

"The Kerry-Lugar Bill is not much different from the other U.S. aid packages for Pakistan. The same conditionalities that have been reiterated in it were in previous packages as well. However, not only is the Pakistani media enjoying more freedom as compared to the past, the level of political awareness of Pakistani masses has also increased. The conditionalities of the Kerry-Lugar Bill and Washington's growing strategic partnership with New Delhi also served as the alarming bells for ordinary Pakistanis. Moreover, the insulting clauses of this bill also created fissure in the traditional understanding between the Pakistan army and the United States. Under these circumstances, the implementation of this U.S. legislation will not be so easy."

Opinion: "The Futility Of Hating" an op-ed by Mosharraf Zaidi in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (10/27)

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"We know that Pakistanis are not alone in the world, when it comes to being more than a little miffed about how their country is treated by the United States. The hullabaloo over why there is so much anti-Americanism in Pakistan, however, is a bit mystifying. The implicit insistence that high levels of anti-Americanism in Pakistan are unacceptable seems to reek of hubris. U.S. officials, both bureaucrats (like Ambassador Ann Paterson) and politicians (like Congressman Howard Berman) have grown increasingly testy in recent weeks, trying to perfume the world-famous love letter of the American people to Pakistan (formerly known as the Kerry Lugar Bill). If the incredulity of Americans trying to convince Pakistanis that their country is Uncle Sam's little love-muffin seems a little ridiculous, it's because it is. Only committed Orientalists would insist that a country of nearly 180 million be starry-eyed about America's thus-far unproven, newfound wisdom about Pakistani democracy. Proconsul Dick Holbrook should get over it. And so should Howie Berman. Pakistanis aren't the only ones that don't trust the U.S. government."

POLITICAL ISSUES

News Story: "NRO Issued For Benazir Only, Says Musharraf" "The News" (10/27)

"Former President Pervez Musharraf has said that he had promulgated the National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO) for Benazir Bhutto and not for Asif Ali Zardari. Talking to local editors of newspapers here on Monday, he made it clear that the NRO was only for Benazir Bhutto, so that she could come to Pakistan, adding, 'Not he , but Parliament elected Zardari as President.'"

News Story: "JI Chief Stopped From Entering Bannu" "Dawn" (10/27)

"Police stopped on Monday Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) Chief Syed Munawar Hassan and his companions from entering Bannu to address a rally. Police also resorted to baton charge to disperse JI workers, who were gathered at Lakki Gate in Bannu city to take part in the rally. Eyewitnesses said that police also fired shots in the air. Munawar Hassan and other leaders of JI were coming from Karak to Bannu to lead 'Go America Go' rally. But they were stopped on Kashoo Bridge

and not allowed to enter Bannu."

ECON/BUSINESS

News Story: "U.S. Proposes Abolition Of All Power Subsidies" "The News" (10/27)

"The United States has proposed abolition of subsidized power tariff for lifeline consumers and instead extending them cash transfers against the use of 50 units. This will force lifeline consumers are just paying electricity bills at the rate of Rupees 1.40 per unit and there is need to charge them at normal rates."

News Story: "Share Market Stages Spectacular Comeback" "Dawn" (10/27)

"The share market on Monday staged a broad recovery triggered by strong foreign buying in the oil and banking sectors at the lower levels but the underlying sentiment remained terribly shaky owing to security concerns. The market's buoyant mood was also well-reflected in the KSE 100-share index, which also recovered 2.44 per cent or 223.65 points at 9,374.50 as the main target of speculative support were the leading base shares."

MISCELLANEOUS

News Story: "U.S. Suspends Consular Services" "Daily Times" (10/27)

"The U.S. Embassy issued a fresh 'Warden Notice' on Monday, announcing that it was suspending routine consular services because of unspecified security reasons. However, the Embassy clarified that the suspension was temporary, and normal service would resume on Friday."

News Story: "U.S. Consulate In Lahore To Be Raised To The Level Of Consulate General" "Pakistan" (10/27)

"U.S. State Department is seriously considering a proposal to elevate the level of the U.S. Consulate in Lahore to that of the Consulate General, and a decision is expected soon. At the moment, only Karachi has a Consulate General, while the other provincial capitals have Consulates. According to the Consulate's requirements, the existing building will be expanded, for which the adjacent 7-kanal plot will be leased."

News Story: "VOA Takes Over PBC" "The Nation" (10/27)

"As of this month, the Pakistani government has quietly allowed the United States to expand its Afghanistan-based media propaganda network to include Pakistan, in a clandestinely signed deal that is bound to generate more anger when the Pakistani government that is yet to fully recover from accusations of a sellout to intrusive American aid conditions.... The Voice of America (VOA), which is a U.S. government agency, and the Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation reached an agreement earlier this month where Pakistan had agreed to expand the Afghanistan-based U.S. propaganda network - the Americans call this 'public diplomacy' - to Pakistan. Under the deal, VOA will use PBC equipment and transmitters in Peshawar, Islamabad and Lahore to distribute VOA material in Pashto and Urdu on medium and FM waves."

News Story: "Pak Journalist Receives Life Threats" "The Nation" (10/27)

"The U.S. presence in Peshawar is being felt in a most aggressive manner, especially in the form of harassment and actual threats given to the journalists writing critically against the U.S. and its covert operatives. One such journalist, referred as S.F.A. Shah because he now fears for his life, who first broke the story of the presence of Blackwater (now Xe Worldwide) in Peshawar along with Creative Associates International Inc (CAII), has literally been hounded out of his home."

News Story: "U.S. To Pay CDA For Snorkel Damage" "Daily Times" (10/27)

"The U.S. Embassy on Monday expressed willingness to pay for the

repair of a Capital Development Authority (CDA) snorkel damaged by one of its employees. The Secretariat police station had booked a member of the US Embassy staff, Jimmy Mort, for ramming his car into a CDA snorkel at the Radio Pakistan Chowk on Sunday allegedly under the influence of liquor."

(All circulation figures are based on estimation)
Patterson